



# INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

*- other cultures enrich me*

*Within the scope of the Slovenian EU Presidency and the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue,  
the National Committee of the Europe at School Competition  
at the Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth and the Europe House Nova Gorica*

## **Welcome to the International Conference on »Education for Intercultural Dialogue«**

**8-9 May 2008  
at Hotel Perla Conference Centre, Nova Gorica, Slovenia**

*The project is carried out under the auspices of Dr. **Danilo Türk**,  
President of the Republic of Slovenia.*



*Zveza Prijateljev  
Mladine Slovenije*



## EUROPE AT SCHOOL PROJECT

Within the activities of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue (2008), that was designated by The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, the Slovenian Ministry of Culture as the promoter and coordinator of these activities, prepared a public invitation for proposals of a national project in 2007; the »Europe at School« project of the Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth was selected and proposed to the European Commission for Community financial support.

The following events will be organized within the project :

- **International Conference on Education for Intercultural Dialogue in Nova Gorica, 8 – 9 May 2008;**
- International Exhibition of Works of Art and Photography, opened in Nova Gorica on 8 May 2008;
- Final Youth Meeting of young artists participating in the Europe at School Competition; Nova Gorica on 9 May 2008
- International "Europe at School" Camp; Kranjska Gora, 23 – 30 June 2008.

## PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

As the organizers of the conference, we have posed ourselves a question to which we will try to find the answers and proposals for solution:

Have we parents, educators and teachers, mentors and youth leaders, journalists and editors as policy makers, done enough to make it possible for the young ones to achieve the knowledge and competences, the social skills and attitudes necessary for human respect, respect for diversity, tolerant communication, peaceful cohabitation and intercultural dialogue? Are we qualified enough to achieve that?

## OBJECTIVES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The participants in the conference will search for answers to the posed questions through the process of:

- Defining the basic concepts and processes, and reviewing different expert and theoretical concepts of education for the development of students' competences for living in a multicultural society, having a multicultural dialogue and its practical impacts;
- Identifying and analyzing those pedagogical practices and activities that enable the search, discovery, forming, transmission, reception and conquering of knowledge and the development of abilities, personal skills and qualities;
- Exchanging opinions and points of view, and examples of good practice;
- Evaluating the adequacy of the qualifications of educators, teachers and mentors in the formal and informal configuration of the pedagogical processes;
- Reviewing and evaluating the quality of the cooperation between the educational institutions and parents, nongovernmental and youth organisations (on local and national levels) and local institutions that favour the learning for intercultural dialogue;
- Co-shaping ideas, recommendations and proposals for our further work with young people, and making recommendations to the shapers of education, youth, media and leisure-time policies.  
(Please find further details on the conference platform on the last two pages of this invitation)

## PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE:

Slovenian and international experts, researchers, university lecturers, teachers and educators, journalists and editors; youth organization leaders and mentors; representatives of school and education authorities; representatives of nongovernmental organisations and governmental institutions; school, youth and leisure-time policy makers. Participants to the conference are mainly expected from Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Italy, Austria, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and Estonia.

*Official languages of the conference: Slovene and English.*

# »Education for Intercultural Dialogue«

## TENTATIVE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

*Thursday, 8 May 2008 (HIT Perla, Casino&Hotel, Conference Centre)*

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- 9.00 – 13.00** Opening Plenary Session  
**8.00 – 9.00** Registration  
**9.00 – 9.20** Opening addresses by the representatives of the organizers and the local community.  
**9.20 – 9.30** Key note speech by **Dr. Milan Zver**, Minister of Education and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia
- Introductory expert contributions**
- 9.30 – 9.45** **Marko Peljhan**, artist and professor – European ambassador of the Intercultural Dialogue  
**9.45 – 10.05** Representative of the European Commission: Main Objectives of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008  
**10.05 – 10.25** Representative of the Council of Europe: Presentation of the document »White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue«  
**10.25– 11.00** Prof. **Dr. Mirjana Ule**, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana: Surpassing the Prejudices Towards the Others and the Different Ones  
**11.00 – 11.20** Coffee break  
**11.20 – 11.50** Dr. **Darko Štrajn** and Mag. **Mitja Sardoč**, Pedagogical Institute in Ljubljana: Tolerance, Multiculturalism and Intercultural Dialogue  
**11.50 – 12.10** Dr. **Vesna Mikolič**, Faculty of Humanities Koper, University of Primorska: Intercultural Dialogue in a Multiethnic Space  
**12.10 – 1.00** Discussion
- 15.00 – 18.00** **Afternoon Workshops in Four Groups**  
**Group I:** **Family Environment**  
Discussion moderated by Dr. **Mirjana Ule**, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana

- Group II:** **Institutional Education**  
Discussion moderated by Dr. **Vesna Mikolič**, Faculty of Humanities Koper
- Group III:** **Non-institutional Environment**  
Discussion moderated by Dr. **Anica Mikuš Kos**, Slovene Philanthropy
- Group IV:** **The Media**  
Discussion moderated by Dr. **Ksenija Vidmar Horvat**, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana
- 20.00** Opening of the International Exhibition of Works of Art and Photography created by young artists on the theme Intercultural Dialogue – Other Cultures Enrich Me, followed by a Reception Party for the participants.

*Friday, 9 May 2008 (HIT Perla, Casino&Hotel, Conference Centre)*

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- 8.30 – 11.30** Closing Plenary Session  
**ROUND TABLE:** The Contemporary Challenges of Education for Intercultural Dialogue  
The rapporteurs of the four working groups will present the conclusions, recommendations and proposals of the working groups; Discussion  
**11.00** Conclusions of the Conference and adoption of the Declaration of Nova Gorica  
**11.30** **End of the Conference**
- 12.00** The Conference participants will join the final youth gathering (approximately 1000 participants), with the authors and prize-winners of the Europe at School Competition that created the paintings and the literary and photographic works art, participated in research projects and created web pages on the topic of the contest: Intercultural Dialogue – Other Cultures Enrich Me.  
Venue: the large sports hall in Nova Gorica

*Our special guest will be Dr. **Danilo Türk**,  
President of the Republic of Slovenia.*

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### **REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS**

*Participants from Slovenia and other countries shall cover their own travel and accommodation expenses.  
The organizers have a limited financial fund to cover the travelling and accommodation expenses of some participants from foreign countries.  
The organizers preserve the right to co-finance the invited guests.*

*You are invited to join us at the International Conference with your contributions, opinions and suggestions.  
Registration form is attached to the invitation. A detailed programme of the conference will be sent to all registered participants.  
Thanks to the support from the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Community of Nova Gorica  
and other co-financers and sponsors, there is no participation fee for this conference.*

**Please send your attached Registration Form to the Conference Secretariat who can provide more information on the programme, accommodation, travel and other organizational issues:**

**Europe House Nova Gorica  
Address: Erjavčeva ulica 4, 5000 Nova Gorica, POB 267  
Tel: 386(0)5302 2006, Fax: 386(0)5333 0325  
Secretariat: Ivan Zadnek, GSM: 041 641 986  
Daily from 10.00 to 12.00  
E-Mail: [evropska.hisa-ng@siol.net](mailto:evropska.hisa-ng@siol.net)**

*You are cordially invited! Yours sincerely,*

**Mag. Franci Hočvar**  
*President*  
*Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth*

**Branko Jelen**  
*President*  
*Europe House Nova Gorica*

# »Education for Intercultural Dialogue«

**The project is partially financed by the European Commission within the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008.**

*The contents of the invitation with enclosures are the responsibility of the co-organizers, and do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Commission.*



## **Partners of the conference are the following:**

### **Members of the National Committee of the EUROPE AT SCHOOL Competition (NC):**

**Dr. Aleksander Klinar** – NC President, **Iva Devetak** – NC Vice-President, **Bronka Straus** – NC Vice-President and representatives of the following organizations and institutions: **Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Slovenia; European Commission – Representation Office in the Republic of Slovenia; European Parliament – Information Bureau in Slovenia; DOVES / Foundation for Environmental Education of Europe in Slovenia; Europe House Nova Gorica; Library of Oton Župančič; the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia; National Youth Council of Slovenia; School Basketball League; Youth Guild; Office of Youth of the Republic of Slovenia; Government Communication Office; UNESCO Associated Schools in Slovenia; Europe House Maribor; Centre of Interests and Activities Ptuj and the Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth (coordinator of the project Europe at School) and its local organizations in: Nova Gorica, Koper, Postojna, Jesenice, Hrastnik, Novo Mesto, Metlika, Krško, Velenje, Dravograd, Celje and Ljubljana**

and

**Council of Europe**



COUNCIL OF EUROPE    CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

**Nova Gorica City Municipality; the Slovene Philanthropy Association; Pedagogical Institute in Ljubljana; CMEPIUS – Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational Programmes; Information Bureau of the Council of Europe in Slovenia; Europahaus Klagenfurt (Austria); Europski dom Zagreb (Croatia); Accademia Europeista del F.V.G. (Italy); Tallinna Haridusamet (Estonia); Dom Európy (Slovakia); Europäische Bewegung Deutschland e.V. – Zentrum für Europäische Bildung (Germany).**

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## CONTENT HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONFERENCE

### »Education for Intercultural Dialogue«

8 – 9 May 2008

Nova Gorica, Slovenia

*In Europe and in the world, we are faced with growing interconnections, exchange of cultural and material goods, globalization processes that are affecting all aspects of our lives. Communication is getting faster and the flow of ideas unrestrained. We are experiencing important changes and becoming more and more co-dependent and at the same time more sensible and vulnerable. New possibilities of development and growth for individuals and societies are offered, but at the same time new dilemmas and questions of coexistence among people and groups that have different convictions, beliefs, points of view and ideologies take shape.*

*Life in our immediate environment as well as global processes have a special effect on young people, their every day's life, way of dressing, choice of music, alimentary habits, choice of idols, lifestyle, life goals, value judgements, relationship towards the others and the different ones. The others can already be the ones that speak a different language, have another nationality, are from other provinces or countries, or belong to another religion group. The others and the different ones could live across the river or in another neighbourhood, attend a different school, speak a minority language at home or come recently as immigrants or refugees into town.*

*What is and what will be the relationship of young people towards them and whether they are capable of a tolerant and respectful dialogue with those individuals and groups also depends on the influences of family, school, peers and more and more of the modern mass-media. In these environments youngsters accept, deepen or surpass many prejudices and stereotypes that show in intolerant, disrespectful behaviour towards the others and are becoming an excuse for their discriminatory actions and "hostile talk", increase intolerance and exclusion, lead to a different perception of the world, distorting the attitudes and polarizing the world, thus preventing any intercultural dialogue.*

*We'll discuss all these questions at the conference, especially those among us, who are in daily contact with young people in the family, at schools, at kindergartens, at universities and during our spare time. We will pay attention to young people that are organized and also to dropouts who left educational institutions due to their failure or social exclusion. In the process of education, we can act on purpose and plan our actions with best intentions, but still fail because the influence of the environment, society, media and peer's groups on the youngster is increasing and, since long time, family and school environments are not their only transmitters*

*of knowledge and shapers of principles and values.*

*Which competences are the most important for intercultural dialogue? Are they the ones for active citizenship, participation in society, language aptitudes, social skills, empathy and solidarity towards the other, or some more? Young people do not acquire these competences automatically, but through a learning process of primary and secondary socialization, with a lot of help and intentional activity of all the key actors for their preservation and development. We've mentioned just a few questions that we might focus our attention on in our workshops.*

## WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

### Working Group One: Family Environment

*Family is the first community formed by different individuals that we face, and young people achieve their most important experiences in it. This is the reason why the role of parents and the larger family environment are of exceptional importance.*

*The environments should be more involved in the changing of the mentality, perception and acceptance of the relationship towards the others and the different. Family is an important space of creation, maintenance and enforcement of all sorts of prejudices and stereotypes. It's the first learning space of the mother tongue and other family members' languages. Does the family enjoy enough society support in the learning of the mother tongue and the language of the environment in which the family lives? Can the family members communicate without fear among themselves in their native language, even outside the walls of their home? Does the family (especially the families of the minority members, immigrants, foreigners, refugees, fugitives...) get enough social support to be able to keep their own cultural, linguistic and religious identities? Why is the upbringing of girls still extremely charged with prejudices about gender differences? Does the family provide enough support to a child and a teenager to overcome the differences between the family values and the majority values of the environment in which they live? How and in what way can we help such families?*

### Working Group Two: Institutional Education

*Kindergarten, school and university no longer possess the monopoly over presenting knowledge and behaviour; nevertheless, their role is expanding and achieving more importance not only in the search for knowledge, but also in its systematic processing and evaluation. Schools should be able to prepare young people for lifelong learning and develop their capacities for social participation and political socialization. They should offer practical possibilities to learn and implement the rule of law principles, human rights and democracy. Schools should provide for the achievement of knowledge and the complete comprehension of it. What should schools do to make young people more sensitive towards the developments*

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in their social environment, so that they can be more sympathetic and open? A contemporary and socially-oriented school offers the possibility to work on voluntary practical projects that attract young people by giving them the opportunity to achieve immediate experience. Education for democratic citizenship should not be a boring school class lesson, but rather an additional equipping of young people for life in a modern society, a society with hundreds of differences and opportunities. Learning and knowing the history of the nations and the ethnical groups is becoming more and more important, and young people should be able to critically analyze and interpret historical facts. Do the schools and their programmes pay enough attention to that kind of history teaching? Do we offer a quality educational programme about religions and their history?

### **Working Group Three: Non - Institutional Environment**

Young people have been living in a social environment since their birth, or they came into it with their families as migrants', refugees' or foreigners' children. Language is the basic tool of communication, and language competences are most important in the process of coming closer and working together. Intercultural dialogue refers to other models of cooperation and not to pure assimilation or total integration in the new environment. Do we, as European society members, recognize the exceptional importance of minority languages? Do we accomplish enough for the young members of the minority languages communities, so they can learn the majority spoken language? Do we recognize the value of a multilingual individual? How do we include young socially excluded people into non-governmental and youth organizations programmes? What can we do to reduce violence and the use of the most rude insults, prejudices and stereotypes towards the others (the ones that are not "ours") in the sports grounds?

Informal ways of education and the shaping of value judgements outside of school are very important. What can the society do to offer more support to non-governmental and youth organizations in their mission of education for intercultural dialogue?

Do our towns and cities offer enough possibilities of socialization for the young ones regardless of their cultural, linguistic, national and ideological differences, or do they construct some form of ghettos made of newcomers, the different ones and the migrants that live isolated lives from other groups? Do young people have enough possibilities to develop their cultural and artistic creativity and intercultural dialogue with other groups?

### **Working Group Four: The Media**

The contemporary electronic and written media are becoming an important co-shaper of the value orientation of the youngsters. The media can spread tolerance or intolerance through the recognition of good or bad practices from every-day's life. The influence of the media

on creating stereotypes about minority groups, foreigners, gender roles or the differently orientated individuals, is unquestionable. Teachers and parents are usually unaware of the kind of information and attitudes that young people find on the websites. Websites are becoming a media space to promote all kinds of discriminatory policies, ideas, people trafficking, forms of abuse and criminality. The international community has adopted several measures to limit internet abuse, but children and young people of today can easily access games and films in which brutality and violence offer the easiest solution for every-day quarrels and problems with all those that are different or our enemies (e.g.: computer games). The young ones have access to websites that invite to violence towards the different ones. They magnify historical personalities that had committed the worst crimes against humanity. Have we developed the adequate tools to control the spaces in which all sorts of discrimination flourish and where human life, although just on the screen, has no value? Do young people have the necessary knowledge and understanding to be able to critically accept and reject most of such information, views and attitudes, and value judgements of film and internet heroes? Do we need a better quality media education on all the educational levels?

For the Programme Committee

**Liana Kalčina,**

Head of the Project

### **Members of the Programme Committee:**

**Dr. Aleksander Klinar** – President of the National Committee of the Europe at School Competition;

**Boris Šavle** – Europe House in Nova Gorica;

**Sonja Kralj Bervar** – Ministry of Culture;

**Bronka Straus** – Ministry of Education and Sport;

**Majda Širok** – CMEPIUS;

**Mag. Mitja Sardoč** and **Dr. Darko Štrajn** – Pedagogical Institute;

**Dr. Vesna Mikolič** – Faculty of Humanistic Studies Koper;

**Brankica Petkovič** – The Peace Institute;

**Barbara Zupan** – Ministry of Education and Sport - Office of Youth;

**Dr. Anica Mikuš Kos** – Slovene Philanthropy;

**Dr. Mirjana Ule** – Faculty of Social Sciences;

**Dr. Matevž Tomšič** – Faculty of Useful Social Studies in Nova Gorica;

**Dragica Motik** – National Education Institute of Slovenia;

**Jože Gornik** – Centre for Information Service, Co-operation and Development of NGOs;

**Majda Struc, Iva Devetak and Vida Ban** – Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth.